



Board of Trustees

Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Committee

December 9, 2024

10:45 AM – 11:15 AM

Minutes

Loughman Living Room, Scanlon Hall

A livestream of the meeting for public viewing also took place on YouTube.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Committee Chair Tessa Lucey, Vice Chair Michael O’Rourke, Secretary Melissa Alvarado, and Trustee Dr. Gloria Williams, and Board Chair Ali Salehi, ex-officio member.

TRUSTEE(S) PARTICIPATING REMOTELY: Trustee George Gilmer

TRUSTEE GUESTS PRESENT: Trustee Daniel Currier, Trustee Chris Montemayor and Trustee William Reichelt.

Also present were Westfield State University President, Dr. Linda Thompson; Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. William Salka; and Director of Belonging, Inclusion, and Learning, Jenyka Spitz-Cassnola.

Committee Chair Tessa Lucey called the meeting to order at 10:46 AM and a roll call was taken of the committee members participating as listed above. It was announced that the meeting was being livestreamed and recorded.

Enrollment Data for Underrepresented Populations

Director of Belonging, Inclusion and Learning, Jenyka Spitz-Cassnola, reviewed demographic data trends from 2019-2023 which covered gender, race, ethnicity, disability status and veteran status.

- Summary of findings show a growth in diversity at Westfield State University.
- Undergraduate statistics show there is a decline in female status, but an increase in “other” gender identities.
- Veteran status has declined in undergraduate status but is seeing growth in the graduate levels.
- Increase in undergraduate and graduate students with disabilities.
- There is a growing need for data collection and change how we collect it.

Thematic Analysis Overview

Ms. Spitz-Cassnola interviewed 75 stakeholders over 12 weeks.

Created office language for Belonging, Inclusion, and Learning mission statement, views and key functions also aligned with Westfield State University’s mission statement.

Current and New Initiatives for Belonging, Inclusion, and Learning

- Events planned by Ms. Spitz-Cassnola were successful with 40-70 attendees.
- Black History month is coming up and students are being contacted to hear their ideas of activities.
- Looking for ways to get students out of the dorm room and getting involved in activities on campus.
- Ms. Spitz-Cassnola has been working to make sure the marginalized population of students don’t fall through the cracks.
- Trying to make the JEDI floor in University Hall more competitive to bring in more diverse students.
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) nomenclature focusing more on “belonging” to include faculty, staff, students, and all the different under-represented groups.
- Ms. Spitz-Cassnola would like, in the future, to create an interactive Key Performance Indicator.

There being no further business,

MOTION made by Trustee Alvarado, and seconded Trustee O’Rourke, to adjourn.
ROLL CALL VOTE passed motion unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 11:19 AM.

Attachments presented at this meeting:

- a. Draft Minutes of October 23, 2024, Meeting

Secretary’s Certificate

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the approved minutes of the Westfield State University Board of Trustees Governance and Nomination Committee meeting held on December 9, 2024.

Melissa Alvarado, Secretary

Date